The Myrtle.

"INSTEAD OF THE BRIER SHALL COME UP THE MYRTLE TREE." ISA. LV. 13

UNIVERSALIST PUBLISHING HOUSE.

VOL. XXI. BOSTON, JANUARY 13, 1872. NO. 37.

In the Fisher's Hut.

STORM blowing wild without, waves at fearful height,
Three little frightened ones keeping watch and light,—
Ill fare the fishermen out of port to-night.

Winsome maid is Blonde-hair, scarcely turned eleven,
Sturdy boy is Brown-hair, lacks a month of seven,
Baby girl is Gold-hair, one year out of heaven.

Fast drives the little boat; there are rocks ahead.
How beats the father's heart in that hour of dread!
"Christ, they are motherless!" were the words he said.

"Christ shield my motherless!" Holy angels bear
Heavenword that anguished cry; yet a little prayer,
"Please God, keep father safe," was before it there.

Busy maiden Blonde-hair heaps the driftwood higher,
Fearful heart has Brown-hair, holding closely by her,
Sleepy little Gold-hair, winking at the fire.

O, ruddy cottage gleam, pierce the blinding storm!
Brood o'er the misty crags like a rosy form;
Hands make a gallant fight when the heart is warm.

Crash! parts the little boat amid breakers white.
Strike bravely, fisherman, for the home in sight!
Love pulls in every stroke—Love will win to-night!

Happy eyes has Blonde-hair, pouring father's tea,
Noisy tongue has Brown-hair, nestling on his knee,
"Goo," says baby Gold-hair, waking up to see.

Our Young Folks.

The Fisherman.

A perilous life, and sad as life may be,
Hath the lone fisher, on the lonely sea
O'er the wild waters laboring far from home,
For some bleak pittance e'er compelled to roam;
Few hearts to cheer him through his dangerous life,
And none to aid him in the stormy strife;
Companion of the sea and silent air,
The lonely fisher thus must ever fare;
Without the comfort, hope,—with scarce a friend,
He looks through life and only sees its end!

For the Myrtle.

Only a Week.

CHAPTER IX.

WHEN the daylight began to come, the boys were quite ready to welcome it. Neither of them had slept since the robbers left them, and they were anxious to get their breakfast and a place to sleep for a part of the day, at least, before they proceeded on their journey. When they came out from the wood, John looked up and down the road anxiously.

"Oh, we have nothing to fear now, I am sure," said Alf. "The robbers must be a long way from here before this."

"I suppose they are, and yet I mean to look before I leap, every time we move now. It will be a long time before I shall walk as fearlessly again as I walked last night before we were overtaken by that carriage."

"I do not feel quite as courageous as I did, and yet I know we have nothing to fear from robbers in the daytime."

"I do not intend to walk in the night any more."

"Are we far enough from home to be safe from meeting acquaintances?"

"I should think we were, these men have driven at a fearful rate. But in any case we will not be out all night again. We had much better be discovered, and carried home again, than to fall in with such dreadful people as we did last night."

"I think so, too."

"Well, let us make haste then, to get our breakfast and take a short sleep, and then we will be up and away again."

"Where shall we go for breakfast and bed?"

"The breakfast we will get at the first house we come to, where they will sell us a good dish of bread and milk; and the sleep I think we must go into the woods for. We cannot afford to pay for both board and lodging."

"How much money did you say you had? You see we are quite well provided for, for we have not spent one cent yet, since we left home."

"I know we haven't, but there is no danger of our having too much. Let us count our money and see just how much we have to depend on."

The boys sat down on a fallen tree that lay near them, both putting their hands into their pockets as they did so, to bring out what little treasure they had."

"Why, John! my money is gone!" said Alf.

"And so is mine!" said John, almost breathless.

"The robbers took it," said Alf.

"Yes. I know now what that man was doing when he pretended to be trying to keep me from falling out of the carriage."

"Oh, how mean!" said Alf, the tears running down his cheeks as he said it.

"It *was* mean, dreadfully mean, to take all the money from two poor boys, when they were expecting to get six thousand dollars before morning."

"What shall we do now?"

"Do? I don't see as there is anything for us to do, but beg."

"Oh John, it is too bad."

"I know it is, but I don't see how we are to help it. We cannot steal, and there is nothing else for us but to beg."

"We might go to work for a few days. I would rather do that, than beg."

"Work at what?"

"Anything that will keep us from starvation or disgrace."

"But what is there that we can do?"

"Hire to a farmer, and work in the hay-field."

"Did you ever cut grass?"

"No. But I expect to do a great many things before I die that I have not done yet. There must be a first time for everything."

"I know that. It is not because I object to work in the hay-field, but I doubt whether we could earn much if we went for the first time into that, or any other employment."

"We need not tell any one that we ask to employ us, that we have never worked on a farm."

"I think they would not be long in finding that out for themselves."

"It might be found out and it might not. I have heard of men going to an employment that they had never tried, and succeeding with it from the first. I tell you, John, necessity is a good teacher. It will sharpen our wits to shift for ourselves."

"Well, I am willing to try it if you are. We will ask for work at the first farmhouse we come to."

It was not many minutes after this resolve was made, before they came in sight of a farmhouse. It was not yet four o'clock, but the farmer was astir, and the boys found him at his barns, getting the work of the day started.

"You ask him," said John.

"Very well," Alf replied, and walking up to the farmer he said, in a pleasant brisk way:

"Good morning, neighbor. Do you want to hire workmen to-day."

"Well, yes, I do want to hire work-*men*, for I am short of hands just now."

"Would you hire us?"

"Why, I don't know about that, I said I wanted work-*men* I don't know about work-*boys*."

They all laughed at this, and Alf rather gained than lost courage, for it seemed to him that the farmer was a good natured man, and he had faith to believe that he would not only employ them, but be patient with their unskilled ways.

"Perhaps you would be willing to try work-boys for a day or two and see what they can do.'"

The farmer looked them over very carefully before he replied, then he said:

"I don't believe that both of you are worth more than one good stout man. Now I will try you at that figure, if you want to engage."

"What do you mean? that we are both to work for one man's wages?"

"Yes. I think you would just about amount to one man."

"Say a man and a half," said Alf.

This amused the farmer, and he replied:

"Very well, then, I am willing to begin with you at your own estimate. We'll call you a man and a half."

The bargain pleased the boys, and they asked what wages a man and a half could earn a day.

"Well," said the farmer, "I am paying the men two dollars, so I suppose you will have to be paid three dollars a day."

"We will agree to that," said Alf.

"Come along with me then, and have your breakfast. I suppose you have had nothing to eat yet this morning," said the farmer.

"We shall be glad to eat," said Alf, "and then we shall be quite ready for work."

The boys were so excited with the prospect of earning some money, that they forgot for the moment that they had passed an almost sleepless night, and had had a plan a few moments before, for passing a part of the day in bed. They found the breakfast plentiful and good, and as they were left alone in the room a part of the time that they were eating, John said:

"I think, Alf, that we ought to tell the farmer that we shall not stay here many days."

"Why need we tell that to begin with? He might not keep us at all, if he knew that we would not stay more than two or three days."

"Oh yes, I think he would. But whether he did or not, it is honest and right that he should be told."

"Well, you may tell him then. But I do hope that he will not send us away on that acconnt."

Mr. Smith came in at this moment, and John said:

"I think we ought to tell you, Mr. Smith, that we are not intending to stay with you very long, however well we may like you, or you us."

"What!" says Mr. Smith. "Has my man and a half broken down already?"

"Oh, no sir. We have not broken down, but we are only travellers, and our stopping with you is because we have had a misfortune by the way, and been robbed of our money, so that we had either to beg or work, and we preferred to work."

Some men would have doubted this story, and declined to keep the boys after it was told. But Mr. Smith was one of the kind-hearted unsuspicious men, and he said:

"Oh well, we will not quarrel about the length of time that you are to stay. I suppose that a man and a half would help me some, if he did not stay more than one day,"

The boys felt happy, now that their plans were fully understood, and they were taken on a truthful basis. *Mrs. E. M. Bruce.*

TELL, act, and live the exact truth always.

Whom Shall We Thank?

A LITTLE boy had sought the pump,
From which the sparkling water burst,
And drank with eager joy the draught,
That kindly quenched his raging thirst.
Then gracefully he touched his cap—
"I thank you, Mr. Pump," he said,
"For this nice drink you've given me!"
(This little boy had been well-bred.)

Then said the Pump: "My little man,
You're welcome to what I have done;
But I am not the one to thank—
I only help the water run."
"Oh, then," the little fellow said,
(Polite he always meant to be),
"Cold water, please accept my thanks;
You have been very kind to me."

"Ah!" said Cold Water, "don't thank me;
Far up the hillside lives the Spring
That sends me forth with generous hand
To gladden every living thing."
"I'll thank thee, Spring, then," said the boy—
And gracefully he bowed his head.
"Oh, don't thank me, my little man,"
The Spring in silvery accents said.

"Oh, don't thank me; for what am I
Without the dew or summer rain?
Without their aid I ne'er could quench
Your thirst, my little boy, again."
"Oh, well, then," said the little boy,
"I'll gladly thank the rain and dew."
"Pray don't thank us—without the sun,
We could not fill one cup for you."

"Then, Mr. Sun, ten thousand thanks
For all that you have done for me."
"Stop," said the Sun, with blushing face,
"My little man, pray don't thank me.
'Twas from the Ocean's mighty stores
I drew the draught I gave to thee."
"Oh, Ocean, thanks!" then said the boy—
It echoed back: "Not unto me.

"Not unto me, but unto Him,
Who formed the depths in which I lie—
Go, give thy thanks, my little boy,
To Him who doth thy wants supply."
The boy then took his cap and said,
In tones so gentle and subdued:
"Oh, God, I thank thee for the gift—
Thou art the giver of all good."

The Young Pilgrim.

"WHAT are you good for?" said a gentleman to a little boy.

"Good to make a man of," was the prompt, appropriate and significant reply.

A bright boy that. We have known some boys who thought it manly to smoke the stumps of old cigars, or to swear, or to bet. But though some men do these things, there is nothing manly in them; they are bad habits, all of them, and boys ought to set the men a better example.

For the Myrtle.

The Minister's Rival.

THE minister stood in his pulpit high,
And preached with fervor and power and skill,
And on him was riveted every eye,
And every spirit he swayed at will,—
Save two little maids in the corner pew
Who never a word of the preaching knew.

Eager faces and eyes alight,—
What could the cause of the mischief be?
Ah, great by small was vanquished quite,
And the preacher's rival was plain to see;
A mouse on the cushions curled at ease,
Eating his fill of the Sunday cheese!

H. A. B.

For the Myrtle.

The Golden Hour.

FRED, Bertha, and little Nannie had one hour of the week which they called their "golden hour." It was in the afternoon of Sunday, after church and Sunday School. When they had their things neatly put away, and had eaten their dinner and felt nicely rested, they always drew about their Anntie in the corner of the parlor and had what they called their golden hour.

And what do you suppose they did to make this hour so happy? First, they talked over for a few moments the lesson they had recited that day at Sunday School; for although they were in different classes they all had the same lesson. Little Nannie always repeated the "golden text," and then each told what new thing they had learned by the lesson, Auntie always finishing with some beautiful thing they had not thought of before.

Then they produced the lesson-papers for the next Sabbath and had a good, busy, happy time studying the lesson. Their Auntie had an atlas, "Coleman's Biblical Geography" it was, with fine colored maps to show the places spoken of in the lesson, and then she read them descriptions of the scene or place. Nearly every lesson gave them some pleasant exercise of this kind.

If the lesson was a parable they talked first about the story: the customs and manner of life it illustrated, and so those ancient people and their ways were made real and living to the children, like the people of to-day.

Then they came to the meaning of the story; what it meant then, to the people to whom it was spoken, and what it means now to us. Their Auntie did not tell them all this, but helped them to think out the thought of their own minds.

And lastly they learned the golden text, which gave them the whole spirit of the lesson in a sentence.

If the lesson were one of the miracles of our Lord, or a portion of one of his discourses, of course the method varied with the theme, but it was always fresh, always full of life and interest to the children. It was surprising to Bertha that when she had learned it two or three times there was still so much new and wonderful, that she never before had found out. It seemed to grow with her growth and strengthen with her strength. A great many people older and wiser than Bertha have found this to be true.

They have never any of them had anything but the Life of Christ for lessons, although Bertha and Fred have read the whole Bible, and their Auntie has told them many stories of the early Jewish history. But soon they are to take up in school the Acts of the Apostles, and they look forward with great pleasure to learning about the travels and toils of the disciples they

already know so well, as they founded the first churches.

Their Auntie is already reading some of the best works on this subject, that she may know all she can about the subject and have time to think it over and put it in interesting form to tell them. Really the charm of the "golden hour" belongs to her, and Bertha ventures to say, all to herself, "I wish my teacher knew half as much about it as my Auntie does."

Their Auntie, too, has thoughts of her own about this golden hour. She knows the time is coming when Fred and Bertha and little Nannie will be far away from the sound of her voice, and their minds will be filled with the cares and troubles of the world. Amid all those cares and trials she wants this Saviour of whom they are now learning to be a real presence and comfort. She wants them to remember and love his words, and to have the thought of this "golden hour" a pleasant and precious thought to them all their lives. Would that all dear Sunday School children had such a golden hour as this!

H. A. B.

"It Isn't Fedders."

One morning, little Lulu was playing on her mamma's bed. Standing up as stiff and straight as a Chinese doll, she would play that she fainted away, and that some kind friend caught her "dust in time."

Soon her mother came in, and, seeing some little brown shoe-heels mixed up among her snowy ruffles, pulled the fainting lady out.

"Get right off the bed, Lulu dear," said she as she left the room. But little Miss Gymnastic was by no means tired of the fun, and did not hesitate to keep right on. One more "faint," then another, and another.

"Oh, it's dust splendid! only if ma hadn't have came!" (She never did care for grammar).

Very soon she threw herself down, as she had done twenty times before. But, alas! instead of the soft pillow, she fell upon the foot-board, and nearly fainted "for true;" for she hurt herself badly. Hearing the cry she set up, her mother came in. "O mamma!" she said woefully, "after 'ou says top, *it isn't fedders any more!*"

Little children, isn't it generally the case, that, when you go right on after you are told to stop, it isn't feathers any more?—*Young Reaper.*

The Star's Story.

THERE dwelt a pure, sweet star, high up in heaven,
That longed for something beautiful to love;
And one fair night, while gazing softly earthward,
All from the blue tranquilities above,
She found a little gold-haired boy who slumbered,
Gentle and sinless as a new-born dove.

For many a night, the star, with beemings tender,
Shone through the quiet casement of the room
Where innocently slept this gold-haired darling,
Compassed with peaceful silentness and gloom,
Until at last, yet watching him, she murmured,
"He knows not of my love. Oh, weary doom!"

Then prayed the pure, sweet star, that God might change her
To one of those glad fireflies that flash bright
O'er meadowy lapses, and low, reedy marshlands,
Through the long sombre watches of the night,
Dancing their dizzy dances, quaint and mirthful,
Fandangoes and cachuchas of delight.

"For surely then," she thought, "I shall be nearer
Him whom my heart has learned to prize so well!"
And lo! the while she prayed her prayer, full fleetly
Down through the gloaming's purple void she fell,
Down to the meadow-lapses and green marshlands,
Where countlessly the sparkling fireflies dwell.

Joyous it was to float on buoyant pinions
Among those radiant multitudes, and seem
A new star in a new and merrier heaven,
Her distant home viewed vaguely, like a dream.
Joyous it was; and yet not long she lingered
Idly among her brilliant peers to gleam.

"For I must gain," she thought, "my love's dim casement
Before the gloaming darkens, and he sleeps."
Alas! poor wanderer, journeying so hopeful,
Her wings are entangled in the grassy deeps
That clothe a broad, still meadow, and she flutters
Vainly to loosen what the strong grass keeps.

All night the cold dews chill her while she struggles,
Bruising frail wings, frail body: and all night
Up from the gloomy sward come sudden flashes,
That pierce the solemn air with fitful light,
Till mournfully the flashes fade forever,
Just as the far dawn rises wild and white.

Edgar Fawcett.

A LAD was on the way to his uncle's to petition him for aid for a sick sister and her children, when he found a wallet containing fifty dollars. The uncle refused to help the distressed family, and they were pinched by want. Neither the boy nor his mother, however, would use one cent of the money he had found. The pocket-book was advertised, and the owner discovered. Being a man of wealth, upon learning the history of the family, he presented the fifty dollars to the sick mother, and took the boy into his service, and he is now one of the most successful merchants in Ohio. Honesty always brings its reward—to the mind, if not to the pocket.

Our Sunday Schools.

IOWA.

—Our Sabbath School in Iowa City, Iowa, has within two years come up from one or two score, to an average attendance of more than a hundred.

—BOONE.—A letter from Rev. H. B. Smith reports him highly pleased with his new field of labor. The Sunday School has increased from forty to over ninety; and the pastor's Bible class organized a few weeks since with eight members, now numbers eighteen, with a prospect of a still greater increase. On Thursday evening, Dec. 14, the Sunday School gave an opera entitled "Laila," which realized $90. The attendance at public services is increasing, and the general prospect is encouraging.

MASSACHUSETTS.

—Very pleasant Christmas Festivities, including Christmas Trees well loaded, were held by the Sunday Schools of the two Universalist churches in Lowell.

MAINE.

—The Universalist Sunday School in Mechanic's Falls, Me., is spoken of as one of the largest and best schools in the State, and as having one of the best superintendents.

VERMONT.

The *Covenant* says the *Universalist* ought to tell where that "anonymous school is, of which it speaks in this wise, 'its teachers number eighteen, of whom the pastor, at the head of a class of fifty-seven, is one. Five are men; fifteen are heads of families; nine have been school teachers; one, a lady, is a college graduate; three are members of our choir; one rides six miles to reach the church and another five miles; not one of them is addicted to any bad habits; they are regular attendants at church, and use their influence to bring in the members of their classes; on the score of intelligence and Christian worth they all rank high in the community; they all love and make sacrifices for the Sunday School, seventeen of them are members of the church and the other is better than many church members.'"

We have begged leave to say that this model school is at Springfield, Vt., where Mrs. J. H. Farnsworth is Superintendent.

In General.

——A writer in the *Independent* thinks that "penny collections" in our Sunday Schools are somewhat behind the times. They might have answered for other days when children had less of spending money than they have now. But in these times a penny contribution is rarely heard of outside of the Sunday School.

"A child now-a-days would feel sorely situated if he was limited to a penny in his candy purchases. He gives five cents for a paper of pop-corn or a handful of peanuts, and he does not expect to get an apple for a penny. It is belittling the missionary cause to say to children that they are expected to contribute to it only an amount which they consider despicable for any other purpose under heaven. A "penny" collection is a relic of antiquity not befitting the Sunday School of this generation."

——A wise friend of Sunday Schools says, that "a Sunday School born in a snow storm will never be scared by a white frost." He does not believe in closing Sunday Schools in winter.

——To the question, What has the Sunday School done? some one who knows, gives this good answer:

"It has placed under the fostering care of the Church thousands of little children, and through them hundreds of parents, whom all other agencies had failed to reach. Yesterday, here and there it gathered a handful of children in the little mission school; and to-day, behold! on hill-top and mountain-side, in the valley and on the river, on the broad prairie and in the crowded city, and over the land, church spires lift themselves up into the blue sky, and chapel bells ring out the glad story of faithfulness and success."

Why Should I Praise God?

I have reason to be thankful to God and to praise him every day, because he is my heavenly Father; because he loves me better than any earthly parent can ever love a child; because he constantly takes care of me and provides in his mercy for my daily wants; because he calls upon me to serve him, and shows me that in his service I shall find happiness and peace; because he has provided a heavenly home for me, where I shall go when I have done with all earthly things; and because he loves not only me, but every one like me created by him and in his own image, and will always be as merciful to these his other children as to me. These are great reasons why I should praise, and love, and serve him.

——Capt. Phinney used to command the steamboat Telegraph between New Bedford and Nantucket. He was a thorough temperance man. One of the passengers in his boat asked him if he never used strong drink.

"Never," was his answer; "not a teaspoonful of rum, brandy, gin, wine, cider, or beer; I never used tobacco in any way."

"But," said a bystander, "what do you drink for breakfast?"

"Cold water," was the reply.

"And what for dinner?"

"Cold water."

"And what for supper?"

"Cold water."

"And what do you do when you are sick?"

"I never was sick in my life," said he.

The good captain meant to be on the safe side, surely.

Evil Habits Grow.

It is related that an Indian once brought up a young lion, and finding him weak and harmless, never attempted to control him. Every day the lion gained in strength and became more difficult to manage. At last, when excited by rage, he fell upon the Indian and tore him in pieces. It is thus with evil habits and bad passions. They are like this lion. If indulged in youth, they will cause us much vexation in after life, and may perhaps destroy us. Youth, remember, and beware!

——What a contrast has the wise man drawn between the wicked and the virtuous. Let us read and understand.

"The backslider in heart rhall be filled with his own ways; and a good man shall be satisfied of himself."—Prov. xiv. 14,

——"There is one argument in favor of Christianity which I could never reason away," said a young man, who tried to be an infidel, and could not, "and that was, the consistent, godly conduct of my own ather."

Life of the Saviour.

LESSON LXIX.

CHRIST TEACHES HIS DISCIPLES HOW TO PRAY.

"Watch and pray."

SCRIPTURE, — Luke xi. 1–14.

Question. — Were the disciples standing by as Jesus prayed?

Answer. — Luke xi. 1.

Q. — When his prayer was ended, what request did the disciples make of Jesus?

A. — Luke xi. 2.

Q. — How were they to begin prayer?

A. — Luke xi. 2.

Q. — What were they to ask for first?

A. — Luke xi. 2.

Q. — What were they to next ask for?

A. — Luke xi. 2.

Q. — What were they to ask respecting doing the will of God.

A. — Luke xi. 2.

Q. — What were they to ask next?

A. — Luke xi. 3.

Q. —On what condition were they to ask the forgiveness of their sins?

A. — Luke xi. 4.

Q. — What was to be the last petition?

A. — Luke xi. 4.

Q. — By what illustration did Jesus encourage them to pray?

A. — Luke xi. 5–8.

Q. — Although this man will not confer a favor on the ground of friendship, on what ground will he confer it?

A. — Luke xi. 8.

Q. — What should we do, then?

A. — Luke xi. 9.

Q. — What is God's relation to us?

A. — Luke xi. 2.

Q. — If a son asks bread will a father give him a stone?

A. — Luke xi. 11.

Q. — If a son ask for a fish, will a father give him a serpent?

A. — Luke xi. 11.

Q. — If earthly parents give only good gifts to their children when they ask blessings, what will the Father in heaven do?

A. — Luke xi. 13.

The friend might refuse to confer a blessing on the ground of friendship; but God gives us our Father in heaven. And if we succeed by constant petition to men, we shall not fail of blessings when we ask Him who is ready to bless always.

Hidden Seed

Enigma.

I am composed of thirteen letters.
My 4, 6, 3, 8, is something which none can do without.
My 1, 11, 5, is what all dislike to do.
My 9, 7, 8, is a kind of fish.
My 8, 12, 2, 13, is an animal.
My 10, 7, 3, 8, is an article worn by ladies.
My 13, 11, 2, is a very frail thing, and mentioned by Jesus.
My 10, 2, 12, 8, is what Christ told his disciples to take.
My whole is one of the sayings of Jesus.

Answers.

JAN. 6. Christmas.

THE MYRTLE

IS PUBLISHED WEEKLY BY THE

UNIVERSALIST PUBLISHING HOUSE,

37 Cornhill, Boston.

BENTON SMITH, Agent.

TERMS—PAYMENT TO BE MADE IN ADVANCE.

Single copy, or less than ten, **75** cents per year.
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